UNITED
NATIONS

CRC

Convention on the
Rights of the Child

Distr.
GENERAL

CRC/C/SR.265
16 January 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Eleventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 265th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 11 January 1996, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mrs. EUFEMIO

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GE.96-10163 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (agenda item 4) (continued)

Mongolia (continued) (CRC/C/3/Add.32; CRC/C.11/WP.2)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Yumjav, Mrs. Bolormaa, Mr. Samdandovj, Mr. Sukhbaatar, Mrs. Tungalag and Mr. Tumur (Mongolia) took places at the Committee table.

2. The CHAIRPERSON invited the members of the Committee to respond to Mongolia's written replies to the questions in the section of the list of issues (CRC/C.11/WP.2) entitled "General principles", which read:

"General principles

(Arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12 of the Convention)

9. Please provide further information on the steps taken to prevent discriminatory attitudes or prejudices and to ensure an effective protection against discrimination, particularly towards disabled children and children in rural areas and nomad children.

10. With reference to paragraph 69 of the report, is the Government considering the possibility of incorporating the general principle of the 'best interests of the child', as provided for in article 3 of the Convention, in national legislation? How is the best interests of the child interpreted by the courts and in reference to which issues?

11. Please provide further information on the ways in which respect for the right of a child to express his/her views and have those views taken into account is enjoyed in practice particularly in judicial proceedings and in the education system. (Para. 81 of the report.)"

3. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS said that, in the written reply of the Mongolian delegation to question 9, she would have preferred more details on specific measures, such as information campaigns or efforts to mobilize local councils to fight discrimination against disabled children or help children in rural areas. Turning to question 10, she said that, although the written reply was interesting, it was not clear how the best interests of the child were protected. She would like to know how, in legal proceedings, conflicts of interest between children and their parents were dealt with. For instance, given that education was a fundamental right, if parents wanted their children to leave school to help them in their work, how was such a conflict resolved?

4. As she saw it, countries in transition, notwithstanding a drop in overall standard of living, must protect the best interests of the child when deciding on budgetary allocations.

5. Mr. HAMMARBERG, referring to the written reply to question 9, said that it was important to identify areas in which the risk of discrimination existed so as to take preventive action. For example, what was done to encourage boys to stay in school so that they would not later become victims of discrimination?

6. Concerning the written reply to question 10, he pointed out that the best interests of the child must also be taken into consideration in administrative and political decision-making. Sometimes it was necessary to strike a balance between the best interests of the child and family or economic interests. How was it ensured that the best interests of the child remained a primary consideration in that decision-making process?

7. Regarding the reply to question 11, he stressed that the notion of respect for the right of the child to express his/her views and to have those views taken into account might seem theoretical, but the Convention called for real changes. He could think of two instances in which that right was of particular importance: in a school environment and in the family. Had there been any initiatives to explain to parents the need to allow children to exercise that right?

8. Mrs. BADRAN said that, while she was pleased to learn that girls were not discriminated against in school, it appeared from the report that the impact of economic change on employment had been greater among women than men. It was important to offset such developments. Also, what was being done to prevent discrimination in rural areas?

9. The report noted that there were 20 different ethnic groups in Mongolia. Did they all speak their own language? Were all languages taught in school?

10. The written reply to question 10 stated that the divorce process was sometimes postponed to protect the interests of the children, but, in her view, a divorce was, in fact, sometimes in the best interests of the child. The Mongolian delegation had said that divorces were on the rise and she asked whether there was any family counselling to try to save marriages. In the event of divorce, who was usually given custody of the child?

11. The reply to question 11 spoke of "educational counsellors" and "professional methodologists". What were their qualifications? Were they the same as social workers?

12. As to the right of children to express their views, the written reply to question 11 stated that children were given an opportunity to discuss certain issues with Government officials. She wondered whether that could really be regarded as a natural exchange of views. In her experience, children were often told in advance what they were expected to say. She would like to know how families were encouraged to allow children to express themselves freely.

13. Mrs. KARP asked whether children must appear in court and testify in cases involving their parents and whether they were protected if their views on crucial matters differed from those of their parents. Was there a procedure for appointing a guardian to represent their interests?

14. Miss MASON asked whether the "children's radio line" to which reference had been made in the written reply to question 11 could be used as a hot line for lodging complaints.

15. The CHAIRPERSON invited the members of the delegation of Mongolia to reply to the questions put by the members of the Committee on the section entitled "General principles".

16. Mrs. BOLORMAA (Mongolia) said that her Government was taking all necessary steps to prevent discrimination against children in urban and rural areas alike. The Buddhist religion made no distinction between girls and boys. Many legal and other measures had been adopted to ensure that local authorities gave priority to the best interests of the child.

17. In December 1993, a first meeting of local governors had been held on children's issues with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The discussion had focused on legislation affecting the rights of children, their living conditions in rural areas and other questions. Considerable criticism had been levelled against the local authorities and recommendations had been drafted urging them to put an end to discriminatory practices against children, promote universal education and better health care for children and remain alert to the special problems affecting them. In April 1995, a second meeting of local governors had reviewed whether the local authorities had been fulfilling their obligations towards children with regard to health care, education and social services.

18. Mrs. TUNGALAG (Mongolia), replying to questions relating to the best interests of the child, said that she could not cite any specific cases, but could provide figures for divorce. In 1994, 939 divorce cases had been heard, of which 168 had been dismissed because the couples had reached a reconciliation. That had certainly been in the best interests of the children involved.

19. From 1991 to 1993, many children in rural areas had dropped out of school because of the difficult economic situation. The trend had levelled off during the past school year, the rural economic situation having stabilized somewhat. Also, parents were increasingly aware of the importance of education. But children continued to face a difficult situation in the current transition period. There were street children in towns, and, in rural areas, children often helped their parents instead of going to school, in violation of their right to education. Mongolia's goal was to reverse the trend towards not finishing school. In 1995, legislation had been adopted providing local authorities with the legal basis for allocating funds for education.

20. Mongolia was a large and sparsely populated country. Cattle farmers in particular lived in remote areas under difficult conditions, especially in winter. Their children sometimes spent three months at a time away from home in boarding schools. That was not easy for children eight or nine years of age. Owing to budgetary constraints, considerable problems had arisen with supplying those boarding schools with food and keeping them well heated, particularly in the severe winter of 1993, when temperatures had fallen to -40° C. As a result, parents had been reluctant to send their children to boarding schools. Furthermore, the trend towards the privatization of herds had exacerbated the school drop-out rate among sons of cattle farmers. In 1995, the trend had been less marked, thanks first and foremost to new

legislation on education that was more attuned to the needs of the market economy. In 1996, priority would be given to reducing the drop-out rate, providing school supplies and improving teacher training.

21. Mrs. BOLORMAA (Mongolia), replying to Mr. Hammarberg's question, said that children in secondary schools did have opportunities to make their views known, but the right was exercised more extensively in the towns than in rural areas. The new education legislation made provision for the establishment of school councils and for children to be represented on them. One of the problems was that not all teachers respected children's right to state their views, especially on such matters as the marks awarded for school work. Since 1990, children had been able to make their voice heard through such organizations as the ones mentioned in paragraph 100 of the report.

22. In 1995, there had been a four-month strike by teachers against the cuts in their pay. During the strike, teachers' and children's organizations had spoken out in defence of the right to education. They had also criticized the outmoded curriculum and the slowness of educational reforms. Eventually, the Minister of Education and his Deputy had been removed from their posts and teachers' pay had been increased. A new Minister had been appointed and the reform process set in motion at all levels.

23. She could assure Mrs. Badran that discrimination between the sexes was not a problem in Mongolia: it was prohibited by religion and the law. However, some customs and traditions did provide occasions for discrimination against women. Girls received very good education and it was significant that 60 per cent of all students were females. In that respect, Mongolian women were in a better position than women in most other Asian countries.

24. Mongolia had 20 ethnic groups with their own languages and cultures, but there was hardly any conflict between them. Minority groups were entitled to education in their own language when their population density so warranted. In conjunction with UNICEF, the National Centre for Children produced information about the Convention and other materials such as children's newspapers in some minority languages. There were also a number of local television and radio programmes in minority languages.

25. The divorce rate had increased in recent years, and that was clearly not in the best interests of children. In an attempt to reduce the rate, Mongolian women's organizations had set up counselling services for women with marital problems. The women's organization Social Progress, for example, had established in cooperation with the authorities a women's "centre against violence".

26. Mrs. TUNGALAG (Mongolia) said that there were two avenues for obtaining a divorce: through an administrative procedure for couples without children and through the courts for couples with children. After hearing an application for divorce, the court usually allowed a two-month period for reconciliation. When a divorce was granted, the court ruled on the custody of the children; minors usually remained with their mothers. The court also took into account the economic and property situation of the couple and the views of their children. It could appoint a guardian if it found that an award of custody to either parent would not be in the best interests of the children.

27. Mrs. BOLORMAA (Mongolia), responding to the question by Mrs. Badran on how children could make their views known, said that regular meetings were held between children and ministers and other members of the Government. Especially in urban areas, children were able to raise issues and offer criticisms in this way. In each of the past four years, a Children's Broadcasting Day had been held in collaboration with UNICEF. The authorities also worked closely with UNICEF to involve the mass media in the discussion of children's affairs and the protection of their rights. The Government had designated 1 June as the Day of Mothers and Children and, on that occasion, the President and the Prime Minister had answered questions about children's issues. In 1995, a meeting had been held between children's representatives and the President and his cabinet. The children had criticized current economic policy and reforms and had asked questions about the reform of the school system, improvements in school materials, etc.

28. Mr. SAMDANDOVJ (Mongolia) said that considerable efforts were being made to ensure that the voice of children was heard and respected in society. Social workers were receiving training in children's affairs and they were organizing child development activities. Support was also being given to children's NGOs and to activities for the self-development of children, for example the network of summer camps.

29. Miss MASON said that she had asked whether the children's radio line had been expanded into a help-line. It was apparent from paragraphs 104, 107 and 216 of the report that the lack of complaints from children was due to their ignorance of their rights. She wondered whether any thought had been given to the creation of a mechanism for hearing children's complaints, for example a children's ombudsman, and whether there were any arrangements for peer counselling so that children could help each other, especially in rural areas. With an eye to the Decade for Human Rights Education, she would like to know whether Mongolia was going to include human rights in school curricula.

30. Mrs. KARP said that the designation of 1 June as the Day of Mothers and Children and not the Day of Parents and Children might be indicative of social attitudes in Mongolia. Taking up the point made by Miss Mason about children's ignorance of their right to complain, she suggested that there might be a need to improve the provision of information about such rights. In particular, was there a programme to teach children detained in institutions about their legal rights? She would welcome further information in answer to her earlier question about the procedure for appointment of a guardian to represent a child in court if the child was in conflict with his parents.

31. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS said that the Committee was often told that a country was free of discrimination, but such assertions meant only that the law prohibited discrimination. The Committee wanted to encourage an additional effort to improve the situation of some groups of children in Mongolia which might suffer de facto discrimination. The report stated that the school drop-out rate was higher among boys and in rural areas: action should be taken to correct that disparity. Nomadic children, too, needed additional attention simply because the nature of their lives made school attendance difficult. An effort must be made to convince nomadic parents of the importance of education so that they would make their children attend the boarding schools.

32. In accordance with article 2 of the Convention, poverty could not be used as an excuse for discrimination. During the process of transition and privatization, a special effort must be made to prevent any worsening of the situation of the poorest children in Mongolia. Where the best interests of the child were concerned, the Convention did not make any distinctions with regard to the status of the parents - unmarried, divorced, single, etc. The point was that a child's parents, whatever their status, must work for his best interests.

33. The reply by the Mongolian delegation on the question of ensuring respect for the views of children was encouraging, but it appeared that teacher training needed to be improved in that regard, since most teachers were naturally against too much "participation" by children. The schools and teachers also had an important role to play in building democracy. Perhaps more use could be made of the Convention and the present dialogue with the Committee to secure respect for human rights in general and the rights of children in particular. The Mongolian delegation might note that some countries had found it useful to allow children to participate in local councils and give their views on matters affecting their lives.

34. Mrs. BADRAN asked whether the educational system in Mongolia might discriminate against children of poor families. Even though education was free, a family still had to spend approximately US$ 100 for each child attending school.

35. Certain groups in Mongolia might be receiving less adequate health care than others. According to the statistics provided, while the average under-five mortality rate was 82 per cent, some aimags had much higher rates. What might account for such discrepancies? Could they be tied to lack of sufficient health care in certain regions? Another factor which influenced under-five infant mortality was proper nutrition. The report provided no statistics on nutritional levels in those aimags with high infant mortality rates. More careful monitoring was needed in that regard.

36. If it wished children to participate in civic affairs, the Government of Mongolia must ensure that they acquired the requisite skills. Teachers and social workers should be encouraged to transmit those skills to students. Schoolchildren in Mongolia had, in theory, the right to evaluate their teachers. How were such evaluations carried out - in writing or orally? Did all children have the skills to exercise that right?

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

37. Mrs BOLORMAA (Mongolia) said that the National Centre for Children and Radio Mongolia had for the past three years been jointly operating a call-in programme to give young people the opportunity to express their views, discuss their problems, and obtain advice and information from experts in various fields. In that way, the Government also learned of violations of children's rights and interests, although most complaints could not be followed up because many callers wished to remain anonymous. It was particularly difficult to resolve conflicts between students and teachers, a complaint frequently heard from younger callers.

38. In an effort to protect the rights of children, the National Centre for Children and the Ministry of Education were collaborating on a programme relating to human rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Those issues would also be included in the curriculum of the fifth to seventh grades, when the following academic year began. While it had not been part of the teacher-training curriculum in the past, owing to an already full programme, the Convention would henceforth be part of the curriculum.

39. A number of articles had been published in the media to draw attention to the office of the ombudsman and the idea had received widespread support from the people. In particular, it was hoped that the office would help protect the rights of women and children.

40. Mrs. TUNGALAG (Mongolia) said that the National Centre for Children, in conjunction with a Swedish welfare organization, were planning to establish a centre for children's rights which would provide specialized training for jurists in children's issues.

41. Mrs. BOLORMAA (Mongolia) said that several measures were planned and other steps had already been taken to bring about improved access to education for rural and nomadic children. Provincial authorities would be increasing their budgetary share for boarding schools by 10 to 12 per cent, allowing many schools which had been closed down for lack of funds to reopen. Children in rural areas and nomadic children would be receiving textbooks and uniforms free of charge. Financial resources formerly used to subsidize children's clothing factories would be reassigned to a fund to help poor families buy the necessary school uniforms. A programme of mobile schools had been implemented with the assistance of the Japanese Government. Those schools provided primary school education for children of nomads, permitting them to remain with their families.

42. All children in her country had an equal right to education. Nevertheless, it was true that the drop-out rate tended to be higher among children from disadvantaged families. The Government had taken steps to ensure that such children were not excluded from the system. In the capital city of Ulaanbaatar, each district was required to set up and finance residential centres for children, who then attended a nearby school. A special school had been established for disadvantaged children in 1991; however, that method had been criticized and, starting with the most recent academic year, children in residential centres were required to attend local schools.

43. It was true that infant and child mortality rates and maternal mortality rates varied between regions. A number of factors affected those rates, including the way in which health services were organized; the level of discipline of the health-care providers; and the environment, in particular the continental climate, which could be very harsh in some rural areas.

44. With regard to participatory democracy in the schools, students were free to criticize their teachers, either in writing or orally. Urban children tended to exercise that right much more easily. In that connection, it should be noted that the entire country was still in the process of learning the skills required to make democracy work.

45. Mrs. TUNGALAG (Mongolia) said that the high-school curriculum had incorporated programmes to teach students about the Convention. The curriculum was the same as that provided to children held in prison or detention centres.

46. Conflicts between children and parents were governed by family law. In cases where it was deemed necessary, a guardian or foster parent was appointed.

47. Mr. SAMDANDOVJ (Mongolia) said there had in fact been an increase in the number of school drop-outs in rural areas. With the privatization of herds, many children of cattle-breeders had left school to help their parents, who were not used to caring for so many animals. The situation would most likely stabilize in the future and those children would return to school.

48. His country had always respected the role of motherhood and had traditionally set aside a special day for mothers. Taking into consideration the importance of the Convention his Government had decided in recent years to institute a combined day for mothers and children so that attention could be drawn to children's issues.

49. Mrs. KARP asked whether Mongolia had considered designing special curricula for rural children which would focus on the development of participatory skills. It would also be useful to know whether rural children enjoyed access to radio programmes. What measures were in place to ensure that they benefited from the same information as urban children?

50. Mr. SAMDANDOVJ (Mongolia) said that children in rural areas did in fact suffer from certain disadvantages, owing to rural customs and to nomadism. Rural children, traditionally respectful and obedient toward their parents had begun to be less so and the Mongolian Government was striving to combat that trend through the mass media. It had, in particular, launched a radio programme (not all Mongolian families owned televisions) to address issues of importance to children. Furthermore, rural children took part in community programmes, designed to improve their skills and talents, and in children's camps, which focused on the acquisition of participatory skills.

51. The CHAIRPERSON invited the members of the Committee to ask questions on the sections of the list of issues entitled "Civil rights and freedoms", "Family environment and alternative care" and "Basic health and welfare", which read:

"Civil rights and freedoms

(Arts. 7, 8, 13-17 and 37 (a) of the Convention)

12. In view of the information contained in paragraph 87 of the report, please indicate the progress achieved in addressing the difficulties encountered in ensuring birth registration. In particular, what further measures have been taken in particular to develop awareness of the importance of birth registration.

13. What steps have been taken for the prevention of ill-treatment of children deprived of their liberty or whose liberty is restricted? Have personnel in institutions for the detention of children been sensitized to or educated on the issue of the ill-treatment of children and is this issue covered in Codes of Conduct for Law Enforcement Personnel and in their training? (Paras. 58 (a) and 212 of the report.) In addition, with reference to paragraph 216 of the report, what mechanisms are envisaged to inform children of their rights?

Family environment and alternative care

(Arts. 5, 18 paras. 1 and 2, 9-10, 27 para. 4, 20-21, 11, 19 and 39, and 25 of the Convention)

14. Please provide information on any recent measures being undertaken to address the problem of the abandonment of children, including clarification as to the measures proposed in paragraph 119 of the report. (See also paras. 65-68, 110, 113, 129-134, 140, 160 (c), 212 and 213 of the report.)

15. With reference to the information contained in paragraphs 107 and 146 of the report, please provide clarification as to the procedures which exist for children to lodge complaints of their abuse and neglect.

16. In view of the information contained in paragraph 108 of the report, what steps have been taken, inter alia, to conduct a special survey of the situation of children in their own families? In addition, has any research previously been undertaken into the problem of ill-treatment and sexual abuse, including rape of children and into the social factors which influence such violations? What measures does the Government consider are necessary for the prevention of such problems in the future?

17. Is the Government considering the possibility of becoming a State party to the 1993 Hague Convention on protection of children and cooperation in respect of inter-country adoptions? (See para. 139 of the report.)

Basic health and welfare

(Arts. 6 para. 2, 23, 24, 26 and 18 para. 3, 27 paras. 1-3 of the Convention)

18. With reference to paragraph 146 of the report, what support is given to the parents of disabled children before the age of 16? Has any study been recently undertaken on the major causes of disability as a basis for designing programmes for its prevention? If so, please provide details of its major recommendations. In addition, please provide information on the steps taken to increase public awareness and understanding of child disability and its prevention. (Paras. 152-155 and 161 of the report.)

19. Please provide more information as to how the Government is ensuring an equitable distribution of appropriate medicines, medical equipment and health personnel to all health units in rural and poorer urban areas.

20. In relation to the information contained in paragraphs 27, 30, 61, 170-175, please provide further information on any measures planned or in the process of development to address the nutritional issues affecting children.

21. Please provide further details about the assistance provided through the activities of the Special Assistance Fund mentioned in paragraph 123 of the report and the Child Care Fund mentioned in paragraph 26 of the report. How effective are these Funds in meeting the objectives set?

22. Please provide further details of the proposed formulation of a new social care system and legislation to facilitate conditions for families to bring up and educate their children, as stated in paragraph 127 of the report. To what extent, if any, is technical assistance being provided as regards the formulation of these measures?

23. With respect to the implementation of article 27 of the Convention, please indicate the measures, if any, taken or considered to support the development of income-generating activities, especially targeted to the poorest families, as a means of improving their standard of living as well as the effectiveness of such measures."

52. Miss MASON asked whether failure to register the birth of a child hindered his access to schooling or other social services. Mongolia had spoken of the elaboration of guidelines to regulate the dissemination of material injurious to the moral health of children; it would be useful to know whether such standards had been incorporated into the legislative framework and what penalties were envisaged, if any. Paragraph 109 of the report indicated that Mongolia's current social and economic environment precluded the proper upbringing of children and that parents even seemed to have forgotten how to raise children. Had domestic abuse increased since the transition from a socialist to a democratic society?

53. The report also asserted that children born out of wedlock in Mongolia did not suffer from discrimination. What percentage of Mongolian children were born out of wedlock? What were the causes of that phenomenon? What procedures were in place to ensure the payment of maintenance and alimony?

54. Lastly, it would be useful to know whether Mongolia had recently adopted legislative or procedural measures to protect children adopted through intercountry adoption.

55. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS said that the report acknowledged a decrease in birth registration, citing as causes the dearth of health-care facilities and the practice of giving birth to children at home. Birth registration was essential because it recognized a newborn child as a person and secured his future access to education and social services. If a child was unregistered,

he was not known to exist as a person; if a State was unaware of the existence of a child, it could not take him into account in, for example, the provision of services. What measures had been taken to boost birth registration? Had Mongolia considered creating a mobile birth registration system? The imposition of late fines was worth reconsidering because it discouraged poor families from registering their children.

56. Mongolian children were sometimes placed in the custody of child-care organizations and the number of orphans was increasing. Children were often ill-treated in institutions but abuses also occurred within the home. What mechanism enabled children both in and out of institutions to lodge complaints of their ill-treatment?

57. Mongolia should describe any measures it had taken to prevent the abandonment of children and provide further information on the assistance available to poor families and single-parent families, especially those headed by women. Paragraph 123 of the report discussed assistance to very poor families. Was that assistance available to children in their own right?

58. Mrs. TUNGALAG (Mongolia) said that Mongolian law stipulated that a child must be registered within 30 days of the date of his birth by a parent or other family member and that a fine would be imposed for late registration, but, in practice, the fine was rarely applied. A child without a birth certificate could not be enrolled in school. As to mobile birth registration, Mongolia's registration service consisted of only one person, who could not conceivably cover the entire territory of the country.

59. Mrs. BOLORMAA (Mongolia) said that, in 1995, the National Centre for Children and its local branches had carried out surveys in several remote areas of Mongolia to assess the status of birth registration and the reasons for the failure to register children at birth. Furthermore, on a regular basis the local branches of the National Centre for Children conducted polls to determine the existence of unregistered children; the central registration office compiled, assessed and published that data and local registration offices took measures to register the children.

60. Mrs. TUNGALAG (Mongolia) said that, although the Family Code of 1973 indeed covered the matter of adoption, Mongolia was in the process of drafting new and more comprehensive legislation which would, in particular, emphasize the adoption of Mongolian children by foreign nationals. It was also preparing a law which would prohibit, inter alia, films and videos portraying subjects that were pornographic, violent or otherwise harmful.

61. The National Centre for Children systematically monitored conditions in children's detention centres. Children held in such centres were observed and studied; they were also familiarized with the principles of the Convention. The budgets of detention centres were controlled to ensure that moneys were appropriately used; and food services received monthly reviews. In 1994, UNICEF, in collaboration with the National Centre for Children, had launched a yearly training seminar for all persons who worked with detained children. Conditions in children's detention centres had also been rigorously monitored by public organizations and by the mass media. In 1995, a detention centre

formerly located in a hospital 300 kilometres from Ulaanbaatar had been moved to better premises only 5 kilometres from the city, making it easier for parents to visit their children.

62. Mrs. BOLORMAA (Mongolia) said that, during the transition period, many children had turned to the streets in Ulaanbaatar and three other major Mongolian cities. In 1992, a home for street children, called "Faith", had been set up, funded entirely by local and national authorities. In 1995, the national Government had spent 600 million tugrigs on its maintenance. In collaboration with UNICEF, the Mongolian Government was, however, directing its efforts towards prevention. It had launched a programme that focused on assisting poor families and on drawing attention to the plight of street children. Furthermore, the National Centre for Children and the Ministry of Health provided medical care and medical check-ups to street children, 90 per cent of whom had been vaccinated. Again with the assistance of UNICEF, open houses for street children had been set up in Ulaanbaatar, Darkhan and Erdenet.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.